



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

May 1, 2008

Rear Admiral Richard R. Jeffries
Medical Corps, U. S. Navy
Commander, National Naval Medical Center
8901 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20889

Dear Admiral Jeffries:

We are writing on behalf of the people of Montgomery County and the Montgomery County Government to express our appreciation of the positive nature of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the BRAC action establishing the world-class Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) in Bethesda. While the Final EIS did not fully address all of our comments on the Draft EIS, we believe you gave careful consideration generally to the community's concerns about BRAC. You have recognized that NNMC is a stakeholder in the community and have taken responsibility for significant BRAC impacts.

Above all, we appreciate the Navy's change of position regarding the applicability of the Defense Access Road (DAR) program to two projects necessitated by the BRAC action. In the Final EIS you have acknowledged that traffic mitigation projects outside the fence of the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) are integral to the success of the BRAC-mandated mission to provide the finest care and treatment for our country's active and retired servicemen and service women:

The Navy recognizes that the proposed BRAC action would constitute an unusual impact on the transportation network surrounding NNMC and is submitting a request for Defense Access Roads (DAR) Program certification for pedestrian access to the Medical Center Metro Station on the NNMC side of MD 355 and for improvements at the intersection that provide direct access into NNMC.¹

Unquestionably, DOD has a moral obligation to ensure the success of the wartime mission of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. As the NNMC Base Commander, your support for DAR certification for these projects is a critical first step in a complex process that could lead to federal funding. We respectfully call on you to take the necessary steps to help achieve DAR certification by the Department of Defense for these projects and to make clear to

¹ Final Environmental Impact Statement, Appendix A, Part I: Draft EIS Correspondence, Comments, and Responses, Attachment 5: Matrix Summary of Comments with Navy Responses, p. 1 of 212 (and repeated throughout the Matrix).

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Members of Congress that these projects are an integral part of the wartime effort and must be authorized and fully funded. The mission must not be jeopardized because gridlock prevents wounded warriors, active or retired service members, medical professionals or emergency vehicles from gaining timely access to the campus.

In addition, because this BRAC action will have an undeniably significant impact on area traffic that will adversely affect NNMCMC, it is imperative that you make clear to DOD that the DAR criteria to provide relief where traffic has doubled because of expanded military base operations are flawed in the case of urban roads in Bethesda. Indeed, the "doubling" criteria are neither statutory nor rigid. Rather, the determination of eligibility for DAR funding is initiated by the on-base commander on a case-by-case assessment that road improvements are required and that local transportation authorities lack the resources to implement them. This BRAC action is taking place in an established and highly developed urban environment, with a transportation system that is already at or frequently over capacity. In just a few years, BRAC will increase personnel on the NNMCMC campus by almost one-third, and patient-related visits will double.

You can help mitigate BRAC traffic impacts in other ways. We look forward to working with your recently hired transportation coordinator, and the implementation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) that will reduce single occupancy vehicles in the area by encouraging the use of transit alternatives by NNMCMC personnel and visitors. We urge you to continue working with county, state and federal transportation agencies to facilitate the flow of traffic and pedestrians around NNMCMC by developing further improvements to road, transit and pedestrian networks. This collaboration is important given the homeland security implications of the proximity of NNMCMC to the National Institutes of Health and Suburban Hospital, which is the region's designated trauma center.

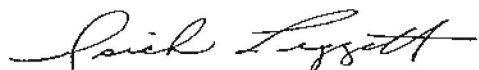
Along with traffic, we are pleased that you have addressed other concerns that have been expressed by the community, beginning with your stated intention for new construction to be certified Silver according to the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Program and that you have submitted architectural plans to local and regional planning authorities for mandatory review. In addition, we appreciate the steps the Navy plans to take to address the housing needs of patients and their families, and hope that the Navy will be prepared to address unanticipated housing needs if they become necessary. We strongly urge that you will establish a long-term formal community liaison to keep lines of communication open and active, beginning with the BRAC construction phase.

Now that the NEPA process is nearing its end we must look forward to the grand opening in 2011 of the expanded Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, the centerpiece of military medicine in the National Capital Region. We are proud that Montgomery County will be home to the world's finest military medical center and appreciate that NNMCMC is working


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collegially with the County and community, as well as federal, state and regional government agencies, to ensure that patients, doctors and emergency vehicles will have ready access to the campus. We continue to stand ready to assist you in this important endeavor and look forward to an enduring relationship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Isiah Leggett". The script is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Isiah Leggett
Montgomery County Executive

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Knapp". The script is cursive, with a prominent "M" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael J. Knapp
President, Montgomery County Council